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SUBJECT: NIGERIA: CONTRIBUTIONS FOR TRADE AGREEMENT  
ENFORCEMENT AND MONITORING REPORT TO CONGRESS

REF: (A) KRZYWDA-GREGOIRE EMAIL OF 03/25/04

(B) LAGOS 309

1. (U) In response to questions raised in the above-referenced email, Post is pleased to provide the following information:

2. (U) Designated Abuja and Lagos EconOffs have primary responsibility for trade agreement monitoring and compliance. The Mission's commercial counselor and agricultural attach are closely involved, especially in Mission-sponsored public awareness campaigns. With State support, the agricultural attach generally takes the lead on issues affecting trade in agricultural goods.

3. (U) The Mission's Trade Compliance Committee  
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coordinates inter-agency trade agreement monitoring and compliance efforts. The committee meets quarterly to review GON trade policies and recommend action to policymakers in various Washington offices. The committee comprises the deputy chief of Mission, the economic counselor, Abuja and Lagos EconOffs for trade, the commercial counselor, the agricultural attach, and USAID representatives.

4. (U) State recently took the lead in coordinating the Mission's response to the GON's January 2004 announcement of bans on more than 40 products. The Lagos EconOff for trade collected data on the list of banned items, narrowed it to those of particular interest to U.S. businesses and economic sectors, and coordinated the first quarter's Trade Compliance Committee meeting, the findings of which were transmitted on February 10 (ref B). The Departments of State, Commerce, and Agriculture, through their respective officials at Post, have jointly planned an awareness campaign to educate the Nigerian public about the disadvantages of bans and have recommended that the USG focus on specific issues in high-level meetings with the GON later this year. In general, State leads the Mission's efforts to respond appropriately to the GON's increasingly protectionist trade policies.

5. (U) Comment: Nigeria's trade policies tend to change suddenly and arbitrarily. Decisions regarding tariffs and import bans are made at several levels of government, including the presidency. A lack of timely published official rulings makes monitoring difficult, and enforcement of official policy is rarely consistent. State EconOffs in Abuja and Lagos track Nigeria's ever-changing trade policy landscape by using contacts in a variety of government and private sector offices to obtain information quickly, put it in a business context, and forward it to interested parties. While the Departments of Commerce and Agriculture have great expertise in their fields, State EconOffs understand the broad implications of trade policy decisions and provide the USG with in-depth understanding of trends. No other agency on the ground can provide that service. End comment.

HINSON-JONES